

Case 2650***Thorius pennatulus* Cope, 1869 (Amphibia, Caudata): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name *pennatulus* Cope, 1869 for the Mexican salamander *Thorius pennatulus*. The name first appeared (about one month earlier) as *pennatribus*, probably due to a spelling error.

1. Although herpetologists have consistently agreed to credit the name *Thorius pennatulus* to Cope's formal description which appeared in an article in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia* (Cope, 1869b (June), p. 111), in reality the species was described a few weeks earlier in the *American Naturalist* (Cope, 1869a (May), p. 222) in a note by the editors from information supplied by Cope. The earlier description is nomenclaturally acceptable and poses the question whether the name should be as given there, *Thorius pennatribus*.

2. The description appearing in the *American Naturalist* is as follows: 'Prof. E. D. Cope informs us that he has just discovered an interesting genus of Salamanders from Mexico. It differs from *Sperlerpes* [typographical error for *Spelerpes*] in having the parietal and palatine bones unossified, and the inner nares opening into the orbits. The phenygoid [typographical error for pterygoid; termed sphenoid in Cope, 1869b] teeth are in one patch. Toes, four on the front feet and five on the hind, rudimentary. The tail is as long as the head and body together. The total length is only two inches. It has a pale dorsal band and black sides. A female specimen contained eggs one line in diameter. He has called the species, which is a new generic type, *Thorius pennatribus*'. This name was also listed in the index (p. 692). Since there are two other obvious mistakes in the article it seems likely that the spelling of the name was a copyist's error.

3. The description which appeared in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia* (1869b, p. 111) is considerably longer. A holotype was designated (a female, the largest of six specimens numbered 6341, from Orizava, Mexico) and its measurements were given. A new family name was established: THORIIDAE Cope, 1869. The description includes a reference to the earlier publication ('*American Naturalist*, 1869, 222'); this was probably added in proof as both publications would have been in press at the same time. The specific name was spelt differently without comment.

4. Brame (in Frost, 1985, p. 605) has noted that the original specimens have since been lost from the collections of the National Museum of Natural History,

Washington (a neotype has been designated by Taylor: USNM No. 111017 (1941, p. 107)), and that Malnate (1971, p. 348) 'provisionally regarded' a specimen (no. 1269) in the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia as possibly one of the surviving paratypes.

5. The name *pennatulus* is the one which herpetologists have consistently used and we are not aware that the spelling *pennatribus* was ever accepted as valid.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *pennatribus* Cope, 1869 (May), as published in the binomen *Thorius pennatribus* Cope, 1869, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Thorius* Cope, 1869 (May), (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *Thorius pennatribus* Cope, 1869 (= *pennatulus* Cope, 1869);
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *pennatulus* Cope, 1869 (June), as published in the binomen *Thorius pennatulus* (name of the type species of *Thorius* Cope, 1869, by virtue of the proposal in (1) above);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *pennatribus* Cope, 1869, as published in the binomen *Thorius pennatribus* and as suppressed in (1) above.

References

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- Malnate, E. V. 1971. A catalog of primary types in the herpetological collections of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia (ANSP). *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, 123: 348.
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